A BRIEF DECLARATION OF THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST;

AND

The UNITY of the Catholick Faith profeſſed therein.

Delivered in a Sermon before the King's MAJESTY the 20*th.* of *June*, 1624. at *Wanſted.*

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EPHES. 4. 13.

Till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the Stature of the fulness of Christ.

WHEN the Lord's *Ark* was to set forward, the Form of Prayer used by *Moses*, was; [a] *Rise up*, LORD, *and let thine Enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee, flee before thee.* The sweet Psalmist of *Israel*, framing his Descant to this ground, beginneth the Psalm which he prepared to be sung at the removing of the *Ark*, after the same manner: [b] *Let God arise: let his Enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him, flee before him*; and then goeth on, till at length he hath raised his Note unto his full height: *Thou hast ascended up on high: thou hast led Captivity captive: thou hast given Gifts for men* (Psalm 68. 18.) Which being by our Apostle in [c] this Chapter interpreted of the Ascention of our Saviour Christ into Heaven, and made the very Spring from whence the Matter of my present Text is derived, leadeth us to the just Application of the Type to the Truth; and putteth us in mind, that the removing of the Ark, which gave occasion to the penning of this Psalm, was an Adumbration of our Saviours removal from the Earth to Heaven; and that by this Absence of his, we are no Loosers, but Gainers, seeing he is ascended up on high, both to triumph over his, and our Foes, [*he led Captivity captive*] and to confer Benefits upon his Friends [*he gave Gifts unto men.*]

[a] Num. 10. 35.

[b] Psal. 68. 1.

[c] Ephes. 4. 8. 10.

The [d] *Ark of the Covenant* (we know) was appointed to be a Figure of [e] *Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant*: the great *King, Prophet* and *Priest* of his Church. Therefore was it ordered, that the Ark should have *a Crown of Gold* about it: (*Exod.* 37. 2.) than which, what could be more fit to set forth the State of our *King*? for thus *we see Jesus crowned with Glory and Honour* (*Heb.* 2. 9.) Upon the Ark stood the Propitiatory or Mercy-seat,

[d] Heb. 9. 4.

[e] Heb. 12. 24.

cy-ſeat, whence God did uſe to deliver his Oracles from betwixt the Cherubins: than which, what more lively Repreſentation could there be of the *Prophetical* Office of our Saviour? of whom it is written; *God hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son.* (*Heb.* 1. 2.) The Ark had both the *Rod* and the *Tables* of the Law, by God's appointment placed within it: than which, what could be more apt to expreſs the Satisfaction, which our *High-Prieſt* was to make unto his Fathers Juſtice, as well by his *Paſſive* as by his *Active* Obedience? for as he felt the ſtroke of the Rod for us, that f *the Chaſtiſement of our Peace being laid upon him, with his Stripes we might be healed:* ſo g *it behoved* him alſo *to fulfil the Law* and *all Righteouſneſs*; that ſo he might be h *the end of the Law for Righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.* The Letter of the Law being not more certainly to be found within the Ark, than the Accompliſhment thereof within him: according to that which he ſpake by the holy Prophet, i *in the Volume of the Book it is written of me, that I ſhould do thy Will, O God: yea, thy Law is within my Heart.*

f Eſa. 53. 5.
g Math. 3. 15. & 5. 17.
h Rom. 10. 4.
i Pſal. 40. 7, 8. Heb. 10. 7.

The Ark had many Removes from place to place, whilſt it ſojourned in the *Tabernacle*: but was brought up at laſt into the *Temple*, there to dwell upon God's holy Hill; the place of which he himſelf had ſaid, k *This is my Reſt for ever; here will I dwell, for I have a Delight therein.* Where, at firſt entry, King *Solomon* ſtood ready to entertain him with this Welcome, l *Ariſe, O Lord God, into thy Reſting-place, thou, and the Ark of thy Strength: Let thy Prieſts, O Lord God, be clothed with Salvation: and let thy Saints rejoyce in Goodneſs.* Our Bleſſed Saviour, in the days of his fleſh, had no Reſting-place, but continually m went about doing good: until at length n he was received up into Heaven, and ſate on the right Hand of GOD. For when he had ended his Progreſs upon Earth, and o finiſhed there that Work which his Father had given him to do; he p left the World, and went to his Father; making his laſt Remove to the High-Court of Heaven, q where he is to reſide until the time of the Reſtitution of all things. r *The Temple of GOD was opened in Heaven, and there was ſeen in his Temple the Ark of his Teſtament*, ſaith St. *John* in the Apocalypſe. If we look to the corporal Preſence of our Saviour; in the Temple of Heaven muſt this Ark be ſought for, in no other place is it to be found: but if we look to the Vertue coming from him, by the Operation of his *Word* and *Spirit*; ſo we ſhall find him in his Temple upon Earth, ſ preſent with us alway,

k Pſal. 132. 14. & 68. 16.
l Ibid. verſ. 8. 9. 16.
2 Chron. 6. 41.
m Act. 10 38.
n Mar. 16. 19.
o Joh. 17. 4.
p Joh. 16. 28. & 19. 30.
q Act. 3. 21.
r Rev. 11. 19.
ſ Mat. 28. 20.

ways, even unto the end of the world; for, theſe were the Gifts that, when he aſcended into Heaven, he did beſtow upon men.

This the Prophet layeth down thus; t *Thou haſt aſcended up on high: thou haſt received Gifts for men.* The Apoſtle citeth it thus: u *When he aſcended up on high, he gave Gifts unto men.* The Reconciliation is eaſie: He received thoſe Gifts, not to retain them with himſelf, but to diſtribute them for the behoof of his Church. So for the *Spirit*, St. *Peter* teacheth us, *Act.* 2. 33. *Therefore being by the right Hand of God exalted*, [there is his aſcending up on high] *and having received of the Father the Promiſe of the holy Ghoſt*, [there is his receiving] *he hath ſhed forth this which ye now ſee and hear*, [there is his giving of this Gift unto men.] And for the Miniſtery of the *Word*, he himſelf intimateth as much in his Commiſſion, given to the Apoſtles, *Mat.* 28. 18, 19. *All power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth:* [there he receiveth] *go ye therefore, and teach all Nations:* [there he giveth this Gift unto men.] x *He gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints*, ſaith our Apoſtle here. That herein alſo that might be fulfilled, which we heard to have been uttered, when the Ark was brought to his Reſting-place: y *Let thy Prieſts, O Lord God, be clothed with Salvation, and let thy Saints rejoyce in Goodneſs.*

t Pſal. 68. 18.
u Epheſ. 4. 8.
x Epheſ. 4, 11, 12.
y 2 Chron. 16. 41. Pſal. 132 9, 16.

The *work of the Miniſtery*, how meanly ſoever it be eſteemed in the World; yet in the Eſtimation of our Saviour Chriſt, was one of the choiceſt Gifts, that in this Solemnity of his triumphant z Aſcending up far above all Heavens, he thought fit to beſtow upon his Church here upon Earth: as that which tended both to the a *perfecting of the Saints*, and to the *edifying* of his own *Body*. For as b it hath pleaſed the Father, *that in him all Fulneſs ſhould dwell:* ſo the Son is alſo pleaſed, not to hold it any Diſparagement, that c *his Body*, the Church, ſhould be accounted *the Fulneſs of him that filleth all in all.* That howſoever in himſelf he be moſt abſolutely and perfectly compleat; yet is his Church ſo nearly conjoyned unto him, that he holdeth not himſelf full without it: but as long as any one Member remaineth yet ungathered and unknit unto this myſtical Body of his, he accounteth, in the mean time, ſomewhat to be deficient in himſelf. And therefore our Apoſtle having, in the words immediately going before this Text, declared, that the Miniſtery was inſtituted *for the edifying*

z Epheſ. 4. 10.
a Ibid. ver. 12.
b Col. 1. 19.
c Epheſ. 1. 23.

of

of the Body of Chriſt; addeth preſently, *Till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of GOD, unto a Perfect Man, unto the meaſure of the Stature of the fulneſs of Chriſt.*

In which words we may obſerve as well the *Matter* of this Building [*We all*] as the *Structure* of it; and further alſo conſider in the Structure, *firſt*, the laying of the Foundation [*In the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God:*] *ſecondly*, the bringing of the Work to Perfection, and the raiſing of it to his juſt height [*unto a perfect Man, unto the meaſure of the Stature of the fulneſs of Chriſt.*]

The *Matter* then of this ſpiritual Edifice (that we may begin with that) are *Wee* our ſelves. d *Ye alſo as lively Stones, are built up a ſpiritual Houſe:* ſaith Saint *Peter*. To this Saint *Paul* doth here add a Note of Univerſality [WE ALL:] as ſuting beſt with the nature of the *Catholick* or Univerſal Church, which is that *Body of Chriſt*, of the *edifying* whereof he here treateth: of which therefore he telleth us more plainly in another place; that e *by one Spirit we are all baptized in one Body, whether we be* Jews *or* Gentiles, *whether we be bound or free.* For the Catholick Church is not to be ſought for in any one angle or quarter of the World: but among *all that in every place call upon the Name of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, both theirs and ours* (1 *Corinth.* 1. 2.) Therefore to their Lord and ours was it ſaid; f *Aſk of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the Earth for thy Poſſeſſion*; and to this myſtical Body, the Catholick Church accordingly, g *I will bring thy Seed from the* Eaſt, *and gather thee from the* Weſt: *I will ſay to the* North, *give up*; *and to the* South, *keep not back: bring my Sons from far, and my Daughters from the ends of the Earth: even every one that is called by my name.*

d 1 Pet. 2. 5.

e 1 Cor. 12, 13.

f Pſal. 2. 8.

g Eſa. 43. 5, 6, 7.

Thus muſt we conceive of the Catholick Church, as of one entire Body, made up by the Collection and Aggregation of all the Faithful unto the Unity thereof: from which Union there ariſeth unto every one of them ſuch a Relation to, and a Dependance upon the Church Catholick, as *parts* uſe to have in reſpect of their *whole*. Whereupon it followeth, that neither particular Perſons, nor particular Churches, are to work as ſeveral divided Bodies by themſelves (which is the ground of all *Schiſm*,) but are to teach, and to be taught, and to do all other Chriſtian Duties, as Parts conjoyned unto the Whole, and Members of the ſame Common-

Common-wealth or Corporation; and therefore the Bishops of the ancient Church, though they had the Government of particular Congregations only committed unto them, yet in regard of this Communion which they held with the Universal, did usually take to themselves the Title of *Bishops of the Catholick Church.* Which maketh strongly as well against the new *Separatists*, as the old *Donatists*: who either hold it a thing [h] not much material, so they profess the Faith of Christ, whether they do it in the Catholick Communion, or out of it; or else (which is worse) dote so much upon the Perfection of their own Part, that they refuse to joyn in Fellowship with the rest of the Body of Christians; as if they themselves were the only People of God, and all Wisdom must live and die with them and their Generation.

And herein, of all others, do our *Romanists* most fearfully offend; as being the Authors of the most cruel Schism, that ever hath been seen in the Church of God. Those infamous Schisms of the *Novatians* and *Donatists* were but petty-Rents, in comparison of this huge Rupture, which hath pulled asunder *East* and *West*, *North* and *South*; and grown to such a head at home, that in our Western parts (where this Faction was so prevalent) it hath for divers Ages past been esteemed *Catholick*. In the 17*th*. of the *Revelation* we have a *Woman* described unto us, sitting upon *seven Mountains*, and upon *many Waters*. The *Woman* is there expounded to be [i] *that great City which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth.* The seven Mountains upon which that City sate, needed not to be expounded: every Child knew what was meant thereby. The Waters are interpreted [k] *Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations, and Tongues.* Which is that very Universality and Catholicism that the Romanists are wont so much to brag of. For, this *Woman* is the particular Church of *Rome*, the *City-Church*; which they call the *Mother-Church*, the holy Ghost stileth [l] the *Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.* Those *Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations, and Tongues*, are such as this proud City reigneth over: the *Catholick-Roman* Church they are commonly called by themselves; but by the holy Ghost, [m] the *Beast* upon which the Woman sitteth.

This *Woman* is the Head of the Faction, and the very Mother of this Schism, the *Beast*, that is to say, they that suffer themselves to be thus ridden by her, are her Abbettors and Supporters in it. For the *particular Church of Rome* (not being content to be a Fellow-member with the rest of the Churches of Christ,

h *Augustin. ep.* 48. Quàm multi nihil interesse credentes in quâ quisque parte Christianus sit; ideò permanebant in parte Donati, quia ibi nati erant, & eos inde discedere, atq; ad Catholicam nemo transire cogebat. *Et paulò pòst.* Putabamus quidem nihil interesse ubi fidem Christi teneremus: sed gratias Domino, qui nos à divisione collegit, & hoc uni Deo congruere, ut in unitate colatur, ostendit.

i Rev. 17.18.

k Ibid. ver. 15.

l Ibid. ver. 5.

m Ib. v. 3. & 7.

Chriſt, and to have a joynt Dependance with them upon the whole Body of the Church-Catholick, [n] *which is the Mother of us all)* will needs go out of her rank; and, ſcorning any longer to be accounted one of the *Branches* of the Catholick Church, would fain be acknowledged to be the *Root* of it: ſo that now all other Churches muſt hold their Dependance upon it, or otherwiſe be caſt forth as withered Branches, which are fit only to be thrown into the fire, and burned. The Wiſdom of God foreſaw this Inſolency long before-hand: and therefore cauſed a *Caveat* to be entred againſt it, even in that Epiſtle which was ſpecially directed to the Church of *Rome* it ſelf. The words are plain enough, *Rom.* 11. 18. *If thou boaſt, thou beareſt not the Root, but the Root thee.* The Church of *Rome* therefore muſt know, that ſhe is no more a *Root* to bear up other Churches, than other Churches are to bear up her: ſhe may not go beyond her Line, and boaſt her ſelf to be the *Root* of the Catholick Church, but be contented to be born her ſelf by the *Root*, as well as other particular Churches are. For a Stream to ſever it ſelf from the common Fountain, that it may be counted a Fountain it ſelf, without dependance upon any other; is the next way to make an end of it, and dry it up. The Church of *Rome* may do well to think of this, and leave off her vain Boaſting. "[o] *I ſit a Queen, and am no Widow, and ſhall ſee no Sorrow.* Other Churches may fail, and the Gates of Hell may prevail againſt them: but it cannot fall out ſo with me." Whereas ſhe might remember, that they were *Romans*, unto whom the Apoſtle ſo long ſince gave this Admonition. [p] *Be not high minded, but fear. For if God ſpared not the natural Branches, take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not thee. Behold therefore the Goodneſs and Severity of God: on them which fell, Severity, but towards thee, Goodneſs, if thou continue in his Goodneſs: otherwiſe* THOU ALSO SHALT BE CUT OFF.

n Gal. 4. 26.

o Rev. 18. 7.

p Rom. 11. 20, 21, 22.

The *Romans* therefore by their Pride may get a Fall, as well as others; and the Church of *Rome* by Infidelity may be cut off, as well as any other Congregation: and yet the Catholick Church ſubſiſt for all that, as having for her Foundation neither *Rome*, nor *Rome's* Biſhop, but *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Son of the living God. And yet this proud Dame and her Daughters, the particular Church of *Rome* I mean, and that which they call the *Catholick Roman* (or the Faction rather that prevaileth in them both) have in theſe latter Ages confined the whole Church of Chriſt within themſelves, and excluded all others that were under the *Roman* Obe-

Obedience, as Alians from the Common-wealth of *Israel*, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise. The *Donatists* were cryed out against by our Fore-fathers, for shutting up the Church with in the parts of the *South*; and rejecting all others that held not Correspondency with that patch of theirs: And could they think well then of them, that should conclude the Church within the *Western* Parts of the World, and exclude all other Christians from the Body of Christ, that held by the same Root there that they did? It is a strange thing to me, that wise Men should make such large Discourses of the *Catholick* Church, and bring so many Testimonies to prove the Universality of it: and not discern, that while by this means they think they have gotten a great Victory over us, they have in very truth overthrown themselves: for when it cometh to the point, in stead of the Catholick Church which consisteth of the Communion of all Nations, they obtrude their own piece unto us; circumscribing the Church of Christ within the Precincts of the *Romish* Jurisdiction, and leaving all the World beside to the power of Satan; for with them it is a resolved Case; that ¶ *to every Creature it is altogether of necessity to Salvation, to be subject to the Roman Bishop.*

¶ Subesse Romano Pontifici omni humanæ creaturædeclaramus, dicimus, definimus, & pronunciamus omninò esse de necessitate salutis. *Bonifac. VIII. in extravag.* De majoritate & obedientiâ, *cap.* Unam sanctam.

What must then become of the poor *Moscovites* and *Grecians* (to say nothing of the reformed Churches) in *Europe*? What of the *Ægyptian* and *Æthiopian* Churches in *Africk*? what of the great companies of Christians scattered over all *Asia*, even from *Constantinople* unto the *East-Indies*, which have and still do endure more Afflictions and Pressures for the Name of Christ, than they have ever done, that would be accounted the only Friends of Christ? Must these, because they are not the Pope's Subjects, be therefore denied to be Christ's Subjects? Because they are not under the Obedience of the Roman Church, do they thereupon forfeit the Estate which they claim in the Catholick Church, out which there is no Salvation? Must we give all these for gone, and conclude, that they are certainly damned? They who talk so much of the *Catholick* Church, but indeed stand for their own own *Particular*, must of force sink as low in *Uncharitableness*, as they have thrust themselves deep in *Schism*: We who talk less of the *Universality* of the Church, but hold the Truth of it, cannot find in our hearts to pass such a bloody Sentence upon so many poor Souls, that have given their Names to Christ. He whose pleasure it was to spread the Churches Seed so far, said

to *East*, *West*, *North*, and *South*; *Give*: it is not for us then to say; *Keep back*. He hath given to his Son *the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the Earth for his Poſſeſſion*: we for our parts dare not abridge this Grant, and limit this great Lordſhip, as we conceive it may beſt fit our own turns; but leave it to his own Latitude, and ſeek for the *Catholick* Church neither in this Part, nor in that Piece, but (as it hath been before
r 1 Cor. 1, 2. ſaid in the words of the Apoſtle) among r *all that in every place call upon the Name of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, both theirs and ours.*

Yea, but how can this be, will ſome ſay, ſeeing the *Catholick* Church is but *one*; and the principal Reaſon for which it is accounted one, is ſ the *Unity of the Faith* profeſſed therein: How then can this Unity of Faith be preſerved in all places, if one ſpecial Church be not ſet as a Miſtreſs over all the reſt, and one chief Biſhop appointed for a Maſter over all others, by whom in Matters of Faith every one muſt be ruled? And out of ſuch different Profeſſions, as are to be found among the divided Chriſtians in thoſe ſeveral parts of the World, how can there be fit Matter drawn for the making up of one Univerſal Church? To this I anſwer (and ſo paſs from the *Matter* of the Building, to the *Structure*) that it is moſt true indeed, that in the Church
t Epheſ. 4. 5. there is t *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm*: for ſo we are taught by the Apoſtle in this Chapter. But yet, in the firſt place, it is to be conſidered, that this *Unity of Faith* muſt be compaſſed by ſuch means as God hath ordained for the procuring of it, and not by any politick tricks of man's deviſing. Now for the bringing of all to this *Unity of the Faith*, the Apoſtle here telleth us, that
u Ibid. v. 11. Chriſt u *gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers.* If he had taught that the Maintenance of this *Unity* did depend upon the Singularity of any one Apoſtle, or Paſtor, or Teacher: it is to be imagined, that he would have overſlipped ſuch a ſingular Perſon (even in that very place where, of all others, his Preſence was moſt requiſite) and run altogether, as he doth, upon the plural number.

That the multitude of Teachers diſperſed over the world, without any ſuch Dependency or Correſpondency, ſhould agree together in laying the Foundations of the ſame Faith, is a ſpe-
x Ibid. ver. 3. cial Work of God's Spirit. And it is x *the Unity of the Spirit* which the Apoſtle here ſpeaketh of, and exhorteth us to *keep in*

ſ Eccleſia ex plurſibus perſonis congregatur: & tamen una dicitur, propter unitatem fidei. *Hieron.* (*ſi modò is horum Commentariorum author*) *in Pſal.* 23.

the

Bond of Peace. Whereas the Unity of which our Adversaries boast so much (which is nothing else but a wilful Suffering of themselves to be led blind-fold by one Man, who commonly is more blind than many of themselves) is no Fruit of the *Spirit*, but of meer *carnal* Policy: and may serve peradventure for *a Bond of Peace* betwixt themselves and their own Party (such as y the Priests of *Antichrist* were to have, and as many as would be content to yield themselves to the Conduct of such a Commander) but hath proved the greatest Block that ever stood in the way, for giving impediment to the Peace and Unity of the universal Church, which here we look after. And therefore *Nilus* Archbishop of *Thessalonica*, entring into the consideration of the original Ground of that long continued Schism, whereby the *West* standeth as yet divided from the *East*, and the Latin Churches from the Greek, wrote a whole Book purposely on this Argument, wherein he sheweth, z *That there is no other Cause to be assigned of this Distraction, but that the Pope will not permit the Cognisance of the Controversie unto a general Council, but will needs sit himself as the alone Teacher of the Point in question, and have others hearken unto him, as if they were his Scholars: and that this is contrary both to the Ordinances, and the Practice of the Apostles and the Fathers.* Neither indeed is there any hope, that ever we shall see a general Peace, for Matters of Religion, setled in the christian World, as long as this supercilious Master shall be suffered to keep this Rule in God's House: how much soever he be magnified by his own Disciples, and made the only Foundation upon which the Unity of the *Catholick* Church dependeth.

y Pace suâ, id est, impietatis suæ unitate se jactant; agentes se non ut Christi Episcopos, sed ut Antichristi sacerdotes. *Hilar. contr. Auxentium.*

z Λόγος ἀποδεικνὺς μὴ ἄλλο τὶ τὸ τῆς διαστάσεως τῆς Λατίνων ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἡμῶν μέχρι τοῦ παρόντος, αἴτιον εἶναι ἢ τὸ μὴ βούλεσθαι τὸν Πάπον οἰκουμενικῷ συνόδῳ τῷ τοῦ ἀμφισβητημένου διάγνωσιν ἐπιτρέψαι. ἀλλ' αὐτὸν μόνον διδάσκαλον ἐθέλειν τοῦ ζητουμένου καθέζεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους, ἐν μαθητῶν μοίρᾳ ὑπακούοντας ἔχειν, καὶ ὅτι τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀλλότριον τῶν ἀποστολικῶν καὶ πατρικῶν νόμων καὶ πράξεων.

Now in the next place, for the further opening of the *Unity of the Faith*, we are to call unto mind the Distinction which the Apostle maketh betwixt a *the Foundation*, and that which is *builded thereupon*: betwixt b the *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, and that which he calleth *Perfection*. The *Unity of the Faith and of the Knowledge of the Son of God* here spoken of, hath reference (as we heard) to the *Foundation*: as that which followeth of *a perfect Man*; and *the measure of the Stature of the fulness of Christ*, to the *Superstruction* and *Perfection*. In the former

a 1 Cor. 3. 10, 11, 12.
b Heb. 6. 1.

mer there is a general *Unity* among all true Believers: in the latter a great deal of *Variety*; there being ſeveral degrees of
c Epheſ. 4.7. *Perfection* to be found in ſeveral Perſons, c *according to the meaſure of the Gift of Chriſt.* So we ſee in a material Building, that ſtill there is but one Foundation, though great Diſparity be obſerved in ſundry parts of the Superſtruction: ſome Rooms are high, ſome low, ſome dark, ſome lightſome, ſome more ſubſtantially, ſome more ſlightly builded, and in tract of time, ſome prove more ruinous than others; yet all of them belong to one Building, as long as they hold together, and ſtand upon the ſame Foundation. And even thus is it in the ſpiritual Building alſo; whether we reſpect the *practical* Part of Chriſtianity, or the *intellectual.*

In the *practical* we ſee wonderful great difference betwixt Chriſtian and Chriſtian: Some by Gods Mercy attain to a higher meaſure of Perfection, and keep themſelves unſpotted from the common Corruptions of the World; others watch not ſo carefully over their ways, and lead not ſuch ſtrict lives, but are oftentimes overtaken and fall fouly: that he who looketh upon the one and the other, would hardly think that one Heaven ſhould receive them both. But although the one doth ſo far out-ſtrip the other in the practice of new Obedience (which is the chriſtian Man's Race) yet are there certain fundamental
d Neh. 1.11. Principles, in which they both concur; as d a Deſire to fear Gods
e Luk. 13.3.5. Name, e Repentance for ſins paſt, and a ſincere f Purpoſe of
Heb. 6. 1. heart for the time to come to cleave unto the LORD. Which
f Act. 11.23. whoſoever hath, is under Mercy, and may not be excluded from the *Communion of Saints.* In like manner for the *intellectual*
g Heb. 5. 12. Part: the g *firſt Principles of the Oracles of God* (as the Apoſtle calleth them) hold the place of the common Foundation, in
h Ib. v. 13.14. which all Chriſtians muſt be grounded: although h ſome be *Babes*, and for further knowledge are *unskilful in the Word of Righteouſneſs*; other ſome are of *perfect Age, who by reaſon of uſe have their Senſes exerciſed to diſcern both Good and Evil.*

The Oracles of God contain abundance of Matter in them, and whatſoever is found in them is a fit Object for *Faith* to apprehend: but that all Chriſtians ſhould uniformly agree in the profeſſion of thoſe Truths that are revealed there, is a thing that rather may be wiſhed, than ever hoped for. Yet the Variety of mens Judgments in thoſe many Points, that belong to *Theological Faith*; doth not diſſolve the Unity which they hold together in

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the fundamental Principles of the *Catholick* Faith. The *Unity of the Faith* commended here, is a Catholick Unity, and such as every Christian attaineth unto. *Till we* ALL *come in the Unity of Faith:* saith the Apostle. as there is a [i] *common Salvation*, so is there a [k] *common Faith*; whice is [l] *alike prècious* in the highest Apostle and the meanest Believer. For we may not think that Heaven was prepared for deep Clerks only: and therefore beside that larger measure of Knowledge, whereof all are not capable, there must be [m] *a Rule of Faith common to small and great*; which as it must consist but of few Propositions, (for simple men cannot bear away many;) so is it also requisite, that those Articles should be of so much Weight and Moment, that they may be sufficient to make a man wise unto Salvation: That howsoever in other points learned Men may go beyond common Christians, and exceed one another likewise by many degrees: yet in respect of these radical Truths, which is the necessary and common Food of all the Children of the Church, there [n] is not an Unity only, but such a kind of Equality also, brought in among all sorts of Christians, as was heretofore among the Congregation of the *Israelites* in the Collection of their *Manna*; where [o] *he that gathered much, had nothing over; and he that gathered little, had no lack.*

[i] Jude, ver. 3:
[k] Tit. 1. 4.
[l] 2 Pet. 1. 1.
[m] Regula fidei, pusillis magnisque communis. *Aug. ep.* 57.
[n] Μιᾶς γὰρ καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς πίστεως οὔσης οὔτε ὁ περὶ αὐτῆς δυνάμενος εἰπεῖν ἐπλεόνασεν, οὔτε ὁ τὸ ὀλίγον ἠλαττόνησε. *Irenæus lib.* 1. *cap.* 3.
[o] Exod. 16. 18.

If then Salvation by believing these common Principles may be had, and to Salvation none can come that is not first a Member of the *Catholick* Church of Christ: it followeth thereupon, that *the Unity of the Faith*, generally requisite for the incorporating of Christians into that blessed Society, is not to be extended beyond those common Principles. Which may further be made manifest unto us by the continual Practice of the *Catholick* Church her self, in the Matriculation of her Children, and the first Admittance of them into her Communion. For when she prepared her *Catechumeni* for Baptism, and by that Door received them into the Congregation of Christ's Flock; we may not think her Judgment to have been so weak, that she should omit any thing herein, that was essentially necessary for the making of one be a Member of the Church. Now the Profession which she required of all that were to receive Baptism, was, for the *Agenda* or practical Part, an Abrenunciation of the Devil, the World and the Flesh, with all their sinful Works and Lusts; and for the *Credenda*, the things to be believed, an Acknowledgment of the Articles of the Creed: which being solemnly done, she then bap-

baptized them *in this Faith*; intimating thereby ſufficiently, that this was that *one Faith* commended unto her by the Apoſtles, as the other that *one Baptiſm* which was appointed to be the [p] Sacrament of it.

[p] Sacramentum fidei. *Aug. epiſt.* 23.

This Creed, though for Subſtance it was the ſame every where, yet for Form was ſomewhat different; and in ſome places received more Enlargements than in others. The Weſtern Churches herein applyed themſelves to the Capacities of the meaner ſort, more than the Eaſtern did; uſing in their Baptiſm that ſhorter Form of Confeſſion, commonly called *The Apoſtles Creed*, which in the more ancient Times was briefer alſo than now it is. As we may eaſily perceive, by comparing the Symbol recited by *Marcellus Ancyranus* (in the [q] Profeſſion of the Faith which he delivered to Pope *Julius*) with the Expoſitions of the Apoſtles Creed, written by the Latin Doctors: wherein the mention of the Fathers being *Maker of Heaven and Earth*, the Sons *Death* and *Deſcending into Hell*, and *the Communion of Saints*, is wholly omitted. All which, though they were of undoubted Verity, yet for brevity's ſake ſeem at firſt to have been omitted in this ſhort Summ: becauſe ſome of them perhaps were not thought to be altogether ſo neceſſary for all men (which is [f] *Suarez* his Judgment touching the point of the *Deſcent into Hell*;) and ſome that were moſt neceſſary, either thought to be ſufficiently implied in other Articles (as that of Chriſt's *Death* in thoſe of his *Crucifixion* and *Burial*,) or thought to be ſufficiently manifeſted by the Light of Reaſon; as that of the *Creation of Heaven and Earth*. For howſoever this, as it is a Truth revealed by God's Word, becometh an Object for Faith to apprehend (*Heb.* 11. 3.) yet it is otherwiſe alſo clearly to be underſtood by the diſcourſe of Reaſon (*Rom.* 1. 20.) even as the *Unity*, and all the other Attributes of the God-head likewiſe are. Which therefore way be well referred unto thoſe *Precognita*, or common Principes which Nature may poſſeſs the mind withal, before the Grace enlighteneth it; and need not neceſſarily to be inſerted into that Symbol, which is the Badge and Cognizance whereby the Believer is to be differenced and diſtinguiſhed from the Unbeliever,

[q] *Habetur apud* Epiphanii *in hæreſ.* 72.

[f] *Fr. Suarez, tom.* 2. *in* 3. *par. Thom. diſp.* 43. *ſect.* 2.

The Creed which the Eaſtern Churches uſed in Baptiſm, was larger than this: being either the ſame, or very little different from that which we commonly call the *Nicene Creed*; becauſe the greateſt part of it was repeated and confirmed in the firſt

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general Council held at *Nice*: where the first draught thereof was presented to the Synod by *Eusebius*, Bishop of *Cæsaria*, with this Preamble. t *As we have received from the Bishops that were before us, both at our first catechizing, and when we received Baptism; and as we have learned from the holy Scriptures; and as we have both believed and taught, when we entred into the Ministery, and in our Bishoprick it self: so believing at this present also, we declare this our Faith unto you.* To this the *Nicene* Fathers added a more clear Explication of the Deity of the Son (against the *Arrian* Heresie, wherewith the Church was then troubled,) professing him to be *begotten, not made*, and to be *of one Substance with the Father*. The second general Council, which was assembled Fifty six Years after at *Constantinople*, approving this Confession of the Faith, as u *most ancient and agreeable to Baptism*, enlarged it somewhat; in the Article that concerned the Holy Ghost especially, which at that time was most oppugned by the *Macedonian* Hereticks. And whereas the *Nicene* Confession proceeded no further, than to the Belief which we have in the holy Trinity; the Fathers of *Constantinople* made it up, by adding that which was commonly professed touching the *Catholick* Church and the Priviledges thereunto belonging. *Epiphanius* repeating this Creed at large, x affirmeth it to have been delivered unto the Church by the Apostles. y *Cassianus* avoucheth as much, where he urgeth this against *Nestorius*, as the Creed anciently received in the Church of *Antioch*; from whence he came. z The *Roman* Church, after the days of *Charles* the Great, added the Article of the Procession of the *Holy Ghost* from the *Son*, unto this Symbol: and the 2 Council of *Trent* hath now recommended it unto us, *as that Principle in which all that profess the Faith of Christ do necessarily agree*; *and the firm and* ONLY FOUNDATION, *against which the Gates of Hell shall never prevail.*

t Καθὼς παρελάβομεν παρὰ τῶν πρὸ ἡμῶν ἐπισκόπων, καὶ ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ κατηχήσει, καὶ ὅτε τὸ λουτρὸν ἐλαμβάνομεν καὶ καθὼς ἀπὸ τῶν θείων γραφῶν μεμαθήκαμεν, καὶ ὡς ἐν τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἐπισκοπῇ ἐπιστεύομεν καὶ ἐδιδάσκομεν οὕτω καὶ νῦν πιστεύοντες, τοῦτο μετάδομεν πίστιν ὑμῖν προσαναφέρομεν. *Euseb. ep. apud Socratem, lib. 1. hist. cap. 8. (al. 5.) & Theodoret. lib. 1. cap. 12.*

u Πρεσβυτέρου τε ὄντος καὶ ἀκόλουθον τῷ βαπτίσματι. *Conc. Constant. epist. apud Theod. lib. 5. cap. 9.* x *Epiphan. in Ancyrot. p. 118. edit. Græc.* y *Jo. Cass. lib. 5. de incarnat Verbi.* z *Concil. Trident.* (*Sess. 3.*) Symbolum fidei, quo sancta Romana Ecclesia utitur, tanquam principium illud, in quo omnes, qui fidem Christi profitentur necessariò conveniunt, ac fundamentum firmum & unicum, contra quod portæ inferi nunquam prævalebunt, totidem verbis, quibus in omnibus Ecclesiis legitur exprimendum esse censuit.

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It is a matter confeſſed therefore by the Fathers of *Trent* themſelves, that in the *Conſtantinopolitan* Creed, or in the *Roman* Creed at the fartheſt (which differeth nothing from the other, but that it hath added *Filióque* to the Proceſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, and out of the *Nicene* Creed, *Deum de Deo*, to the Articles that concern the Son) that *Only Foundation*, and Principle of Faith is to be found, in the *Unity* whereof all Chriſtians muſt neceſſarily agree. Which is otherwiſe cleared ſufficiently, by the conſtant Practice of the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors, in the firſt receiving of Men into the Society of the Church. For in one of the Apoſtles ordinary Sermons, we ſee, there was ſo much Matter delivered, as was ſufficient to convert Men unto the Faith, and to make them capable of Baptiſm: and thoſe Sermons treated only of the firſt Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt; upon the receiving whereof, the Church (following the Example of the Apoſtles) never did deny Baptiſm unto her *Catechumeni*. In theſe firſt Principles therefore muſt the Foundation be contained, and that common *Unity of Faith* which is required in all the Members of the Church.

The Foundation then being thus cleared; concerning the Su-
[a] 1 Cor. 3. 12. perſtruction, we learn from the Apoſtle, that ſome [a] *build upon this Foundation, Gold, Silver, precious Stones, Wood, Hay, Stubble.* Some proceed from one degree of wholſom Knowledge unto another, increaſing their main Stock, by the Addition of thoſe other ſacred Truths that are revealed in the Word of God: and theſe build upon the Foundation, *Gold*, and *Silver*, and *precious Stones*. Others retain the precious Foundation, but lay baſe Matter upon it; *Wood, Hay, Stubble*, and ſuch other either unprofitable or more dangerous ſtuff: and others go ſo far, that they overthrow the very Foundation it ſelf. The firſt of theſe be *wiſe*, the ſecond *fooliſh*, the third *mad* Builders. When the day of Tryal com-
[b] Ibid. v. 14. eth: the firſt Mans [b] *Work ſhall abide*, and he himſelf ſhall *receive a Reward*; the ſecond ſhall loſe his Work, but not him-
[c] Ibid. v. 15. ſelf; (*c he ſhall ſuffer Loſs*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *but he himſelf ſhall be ſaved:*) the third ſhall loſe both himſelf and his Work to-togeather. And as in this Spiritual Structure very different kinds of Materials may be laid upon the ſame Foundation, ſome ſound, and ſome unſound: ſo in either of them, there is a great difference to be made betwixt ſuch as are more contiguous to the Foundation, and ſuch as be remoter off. The fuller Explication of the firſt Principles of Faith, and the Concluſions deduced from

from thence, are in the rank of thoſe Verities that be more nearly conjoyned to the Foundation: to which thoſe Falſities are anſwerable on the other ſide, that grate upon the Foundation, and any way endanger it.

For that there be divers Degrees both of Truths and Errors in Religion, which neceſſarily muſt be diſtinguiſhed; is a thing acknowledged, not by us alone, but by the Learnedſt alſo of our Adverſaries. [d] *There be ſome Catholick Verities* (ſay they) *which do ſo pertain to Faith, that theſe being taken away, the Faith it ſelf muſt be taken away alſo. And theſe by common uſe we call not only Catholick, but Verities of Faith alſo. There are other Verities which be Catholick alſo and univerſal, namely, ſuch as the whole Church holdeth, which yet being overthrown, the Faith is ſhaken indeed, but not overturned. And in the Errors that are contrary to ſuch Truths as theſe, the Faith is obſcured, not extinguiſhed; weakned, not periſhed.* Nevertheleſs, [e] *though the Faith be not altogether deſtroyed by them, yet is it evil at eaſe, and ſhaken; and as it were diſpoſed to Corruption. For as there be certain hurts of the Body which do not take away the Life, but yet a man is the worſe for them, and diſpoſed to Corruption either in whole or in part; as there be other mortal Hurts which take away the Life: ſo likewiſe are there certain degrees of Propoſitions, which contain unſound Doctrine, although they have not manifeſt Hereſie.* In a word, the general Rule concerning all theſe Superſtructions, is; That the more near they are to the Foundation, of ſo much greater Importance be the Truths, and ſo much more perillous be the Errors; as again, the farther they are removed off, the leſs neceſſary doth the knowledge of ſuch Verities prove to be, and the ſwerving from the Truth leſs dangerous.

[d] Quædam ſunt catholicæ veritates, quæ ita ad fidem pertinent, ut his ſublatis, fides quoque ipſa tollatur. Quas nos, uſu frequenti non ſolùm catholicas, ſed fidei veritates appellavimus Aliæ veritates ſunt etiam ipſæ catholicæ & univerſales, nempe quas univerſa Eccleſia tenet, quibus lîcèt everſis, fides quatitur, ſed non evertitur tamen. Atq; in hujuſmodi veritatum contrariis erroribus, dixi fidem obſcurari, non extingui; infirmari, non perire. Has ergo nunquam fidei veritates cenſui vocandas, quamvis doctrinæ Chriſtianæ veritates ſint. *Melch. Canus loc. Theolog. lib.* 12. *cap.* 11.

[e] Neceſſariò oportet diſtinguere alios gradus propoſitionum, per quas etiamſi fides non deſtruatur omninò, tamen malè habet, & quatitur, & quaſi diſponitur ad corruptionem. Sicut ſunt quædam corporum læſiones quæ non auferunt vitam, ſed malè habet homo per eas, & diſponitur ad corruptionem aut in toto aut in parte; aliæ verò ſunt læſiones mortales, quæ vitam eripiunt: ita ſunt quidam gradus propoſitionum, continentes doctrinam non ſanam, etiamſi non habeant hæreſim manifeſtam, *Dominic. Bannes. in* 2am 2æ *quæſt.* 11. *artic.* 2.

Now from all that hath been ſaid, two great Queſtions may be reſolved, which trouble many. The firſt is; What we may

judge of our Fore-fathers, who lived in the Communion of the Church of *Rome*? Whereunto I anſwer, that we have no reaſon to think otherwiſe, but that they lived and died under the Mercy of God. For we muſt diſtinguiſh the *Papacy* from the *Church* wherein it is; as the Apoſtle doth [f] *Antichriſt* from *the Temple of God*, wherein he ſitteth. The Foundation upon which the Church ſtandeth, is that *common Faith*, (as we have heard) in the *Unity* whereof all Chriſtians do generally accord. Upon this new Foundation *Antichriſt* raiſeth up his new Buildings; and layeth upon it, not *Hay* and *Stubble* only, but far more vile and pernicious Matter, which wrencheth and diſturbeth the very Foundation it ſelf. For Example. It is a ground of the *Catholick* Faith, that *Chriſt was born of the Virgin Mary*: which in the Scripture is thus explained: [g] *God ſent forth his Son, Made of a Woman.* This the Papacy admitteth for a certain Truth: but inſinuateth withal, that upon the Altar God ſendeth forth his Son made of Bread. For the *Tranſubſtantiation* which theſe men would have us believe, is not an Annihilation of the Bread, and a Subſtitution of the Body of Chriſt in the ſtead thereof, but a real Converſion of the one into the other: ſuch as they themſelves would have eſteemed to be a Bringing forth of Chriſt, and a kind of Generation of him. For, to omit the wild Conceits of *Poſtellus* in his Book *De Nativitate Mediatoris ultimâ*, this is the Doctrine of their *graver Divines* (as *Cornelius à Lapide* the Jeſuit doth acknowledge in his Roman Lectures) that [h] *by the words of Conſecration truly and really as the Bread is tranſubſtantiated, ſo Chriſt is produced and as it were generated upon the Altar, in ſuch a powerful and effectual Manner; that, if Chriſt as yet had not been incarnate, by theſe words* [Hoc eſt corpus meum] *he ſhould be incarnated, and aſſume an humane Body.* And doth not this new Divinity, think you, ſhrewdly threaten the ancient Foundation of the *Catholick* Belief of the *Incarnation*?

2 Theſ. 2. 4.

g Gal. 4. 4.

h Per verba conſecrationis verè & realiter uti tranſubſtantiatur panis, ita producitur & quaſi generatur Chriſtus in altari, adeò potenter & efficaciter, ut ſi Chriſtus nec dum eſſet incarnatus, per hæc verba *Hoc eſt corpus meum*, incarnaretur, corpuſq; humanum aſſumeret: ut graves Theologi docent. *Cornelius Cornelii à Lapide comment. in Eſai. 7. 14.*

Yet ſuch as in the days of our Fore-fathers oppoſed the Popiſh Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, could alledge for themſelves, [i] that the Faith which they maintained, was then *preſerved among the Laity, and ſo had anciently been preſerved.* And of mine own

i Confitentur alii, quòd fides ſua, quâ aſtruunt quòd panis & vinum remanent poſt Conſecrationem in naturis ſuis, adhuc ſervatur laicis, & antiquitùs ſervabatur. *Jo. Tiſſington, in Confeſſione cont. Jo. Wicliff. quam MS. habeo.*

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knowledge I can teſtifie, that when I have dealt with ſome of the common people, that would be accounted Members of the *Roman* Church, and demanded of them what they thought of that which I knew to be the common *Tenet* of their Doctors in this Point: they not only rejected it with Indignation, but wondered alſo that I ſhould imagine any of their ſide to be ſo fooliſh, as to give credit to ſuch a ſenſeleſs thing. Neither may we account it to have been a ſmall Bleſſing of God unto our Anceſtors, who lived in that kingdom of Darkneſs, that the Ignorance wherein they were bred, freed them from the underſtanding of thoſe things, which being known might prove ſo prejudicial to their Souls health. k *For there be ſome things, which it is better for a man to be ignorant of, than to know:* and the not knowing of thoſe Profundities, which are indeed *the depths of Satan*, is to thoſe that have not the Skill to dive into the Bottom of ſuch Myſteries of Iniquity, a good and an happy Ignorance.

k Sunt enim quædam, quæ neſcire, quàm ſcire, ſit melius. *Aug. Enchirid. Ad Laurent. cap.* 17. 1 Rev. 2. 24.

The Ignorance of thoſe Principles of the *Catholick* Faith, that are abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, is as dangerous a Gulf on the other ſide: but the Light of thoſe common Truths of Chriſtianity was ſo great, and ſo firmly fixed in the Minds of thoſe that profeſſed the Name of Chriſt; that it was not poſſible for the power of Darkneſs to extinguiſh it, nor the Gates of Hell to prevail againſt it. Nay, the very ſolemn Days, which by the ancient Inſtitution of the Church were celebrated for the Commemoration of the *Bleſſed Trinity*, the *Nativity*, *Paſſion*, *Reſurrection* and *Aſcention* of our Saviour Chriſt, did ſo preſerve the Memory of theſe things among the common People; that by the m Popiſh Doctors themſelves, it is made an Argument of groſs and ſupine Ignorance, that any ſhould not have explicate Knowledge of thoſe Myſteries of Chriſt, which were thus publickly ſolemnized in the Church. And (which is the principal Point of all) the ordinary Inſtruction appointed to be given unto Men upon their Death-beds, was: n that they ſhould look *to come to Glory, not by their own Merits, but by the Vertue and Merit of the Paſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; that they ſhould *place their whole Confidence in his Death only, and in no other thing*; and that they ſhould *interpoſe his Death between God and their Sins, betwixt them and God's Anger*.

m *Sylveſt. in Summâ, verb.* Fides. §. 6. ex *Thom. in* 2a 2æ, *quæſt.* 2. *art.* 7.

n See *my Treatiſe*, De Chriſtianarum Eccleſiarum ſucceſſione & ſtatu, *cap.* 7. §. 21, 22.

So that where theſe things did thus concur in any (as we doubt not but they did in many Thouſands,) the knowledge of the common Principles of the Faith, the Ignorance of ſuch main Errors

as did endanger the Foundation, a godly Life, and a faithful Death; there we have no cauſe to make any queſtion, but that God hath fitted a Subject for his Mercy to work upon. And yet in ſaying thus, we do nothing leſs than ſay, that ſuch as theſe were *Papiſts*, either in their Life or in their Death: Members of the *Roman* Church perhaps they were, but ſuch as by God's Goodneſs were preſerved from the Mortality of *Popery* that reigned there. For *Popery* it ſelf is nothing elſe but the Botch or the Plague of that Church; which hazardeth the Souls of thoſe it ſeizeth upon, as much as any Infection can do the Body. And therefore if any one will needs be ſo fool-hardy as to take up his Lodging in ſuch a Peſt-houſe, after warning given of the preſent danger; we in our Charity may well ſay, *Lord have Mercy upon him:* but he, in the mean time, hath great cauſe to fear, that God in his Juſtice will inflict that Judgment upon him, which o in this caſe he hath threatned againſt ſuch as will *not believe the Truth, but take pleaſure in Unrighteouſnes.* And ſo much may ſuffice for that Queſtion.

o 2 Theſſ. 2. 12.

The ſecond Queſtion, ſo rife in the Mouths of our Adverſaries, is: *Where was your Church before Luther?* Whereunto an Anſwer may be returned from the grounds of the Solution of the former Queſtion: That our Church was even there where now it is. In all places of the World, where the ancient Foundations were retained, and theſe common Principles of Faith, upon the profeſſion whereof Men have ever been wont to be admitted, by Baptiſm, into the Church of Chriſt: there we doubt not but our Lord had his Subjects, and we our Fellow-ſervants. For we bring in no new Faith, nor no new Church. That which in the time of the ancient Fathers p was accounted to be *truly and properly Catholick*, namely, *that which was believed every where, always, and by all:* that in the ſucceeding Ages hath evermore been preſerved, and is at this day entirely profeſſed in our Church. And it is well obſerved by a learned Man, who hath written a full Diſcourſe of this Argument; that q *whatſoever the Father of Lies*

p In ipsâ Catholicâ Eccleſiâ magnoperè curandum eſt, ut id teneamus quod ubique, quod ſemper, quod ab omnibus creditum eſt: hoc eſt etenim verè propriéq; Catholicum. *Vincent. Lirin. cont. hæreſ. cap.* 3.

q Quicquid vel molitus ſit vel moliturus ſit mendacii Pater, non tamen vel effeciſſe hactenùs vel effecturum poſthâc, ut hæc doctrina catholica, omnium Chriſtianorum conſenſu, ſemper & ubique rata, aboleatur: quin potiùs illam in denſiſſimâ maximè involutarum perturbationum caligine victricem extitiſſe, & in animis & in apertâ confeſſione Chriſtianorum omnium, in ſuis fundamentis nullo modo labefactatam. In illa quoque veritate unam illam Eccleſiam fuiſſe conſervatam in mediis ſæviſſimæ hyemis tempeſtatibus, vel denſiſſimis tènebris ſuorum interluviorum. *Joh. Serranus, in Apparat. ad fidem Cathol. edit. Pariſ. an.* 1607. *p.* 172.

either

either hath attempted or ſhall attempt, yet neither hath he hitherto effected, nor ſhall ever bring it to paſs hereafter; that this Catholick Doctrine, ratified by the common conſent of Chriſtians always and every where, ſhould be aboliſhed; but that in the thickeſt Miſt rather of the moſt perplexed Troubles, it ſtill obtained Victory, both in the Minds and in the open Confeſſion of all Chriſtians, no ways overturned in the Foundation thereof: and that in this Verity, that one Church of Chriſt was preſerved in the midſt of the Tempeſts of the moſt cruel Winter, or in the thickeſt Darkneſs of her Waynings.

Thus if at this day we ſhould take a Survey of the ſeveral Profeſſions of Chriſtianity, that have any large Spread in any part of the world (as of the Religion of the *Roman* and the *Reformed* Churches in our quarters, of the *Ægyptians* and *Æthiopians* in the South, of the *Grecians* and other Chriſtians in the Eaſtern Parts,) and ſhould put by the Points wherein they did differ one from another, and gather into one Body the reſt of the Articles wherein they all did generally agree: we ſhould find, that in thoſe Propoſitions, which without all controverſie are univerſally received in the whole chriſtian World, ſo much Truth is contained, as, being joyned with holy Obedience, may be ſufficient to bring a Man unto everlaſting Salvation. Neither have we cauſe to doubt, but that [r] *as many as do walk according to this Rule* (neither overthrowing that which they have builded, by ſuper-inducing any *damnable Hereſies* thereupon, nor otherwiſe vitiating their *holy Faith* with a lewd and wicked Converſation) *Peace ſhall be upon them, and Mercy, and upon the* Iſrael *of GOD.*

[r] Gal. 6. 16.

Now theſe common Principles of the Chriſtian Faith, which we call κοινόπισα, or things *generally believed* of all, as they have [ſ] *Univerſality* and *Antiquity*, and *Conſent* concurring with them (which by *Vincentius* his Rule, are the ſpecial Characters of that which is truly and properly *Catholick:*) ſo for their *Duration* we are aſſure that they have ſtill held out, and been kept as the *Seminary* of the *Catholick* Church, in the darkeſt and difficulteſt Times that ever have been: where if the Lord of Hoſts had not in his Mercy reſerved this Seed unto us, we ſhould long ſince [t] *have been as* Sodom, *and ſhould have been like unto* Gomorrah. It cannot be denied indeed, that *Satan* and his Inſtruments have uſed their utmoſt Endeavour, either to hide this Light from mens Eyes, by keeping them in groſs Ignorance, or to deprave it by bringing

[ſ] Univerſitatem, antiquitatem, conſentionem. *Vincent. Lirin. cont. hæreſ. cap.* 3.

[t] Eſay 1. 9.

ing in pernicious Hereſies; and that in theſe latter Ages they have much prevailed both ways, as well in the *Weſt* and *North*, as in the *Eaſt* and *South*. Yet far be it, for all this, from any man to think, that [u] *God ſhould ſo caſt away his People*, that in thoſe times there ſhould not be left *a Remnant according to the Election of Grace*.

[u] Rom. 11. 2. 5.

The Chriſtian Church was never brought unto a lower Ebb, than was the Jewiſh Synagogue in the days of our Saviour Chriſt; when [x] the *Interpreters of the Law* had taken away the Key of Knowledge: and that little Knowledge that remained, was miſerably corrupted, not only with the Leaven of the *Phariſees*, but alſo with the damnable Hereſie of the *Sadduces*. And yet a man at that time might have ſeen the true Servants of GOD ſtanding together with theſe men in the ſelf-ſame Temple: which might well be accounted, as the *Houſe of the Saints* in regard of the one, ſo a *Den of Thieves* in reſpect of the other. When the peſtilent Hereſie of the *Arrians* had polluted the whole World; the people of Chriſt were not to be found among them only who made an open Seceſſion from that wicked Company, but among thoſe alſo who held external Communion with them, and lived under their Miniſtery. Where they ſo learned the other Truths of GOD from them, that they were yet ignorant of their main Error; God in his Providence ſo ordering Matters, that (as it is noted by St. [y] *Hilary*) *the People of Chriſt ſhould not periſh under the Prieſts of Antichriſt*.

[x] Luk. 11. 52.

[y] Et hujus quidem uſq; adhuc impietatis occaſio per fraudem perficitur; ut jam ſub Antichriſti Sacerdotibus Chriſti populus non occidat. *Hilar. cont. Auxentium.*

If you demand then, Where was *God's Temple* all this while? the Anſwer is at hand: There where *Antichriſt* ſate. Where was *Chriſt's* People? Even under *Antichriſt's* Prieſts: and yet this is no Juſtification at all, either of *Antichriſt*, or of his *Prieſts*; but a Manifeſtation of Gods great Power, who is able to uphold his Church even there [z] *Where Satan's Throne is*. *Babylon* was an infectious place, and the Infection thereof was mortal: and yet God had his people there, whom he preſerved from the mortality of that Infection. Elſe how ſhould he have ſaid; [a] *Come out of her my People; that ye be not partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues*. If the place had not been infectious, he ſhould not have needed to forewarn them of the Danger wherein they ſtood of *partaking in her Sins*; and if the Infection had not been mortal, he would not have put them in mind of the *Plagues* that were to follow: and if in the place thus mortally infected, God had not preſerved a People alive unto himſelf,

[z] Revel. 2. 13.

[a] Revel. 18. 4.

he

he could not have said; *Come out of her my People.*

The Enemy indeed had there sown his Tares: but b sown them in the LORD'S Field, and among the LORD'S Wheat. And a Field, we know, may so be c overgrown with such evil Weeds as these, that at the first sight a man would hardly think, that any Corn were there at all: even as in the Barn it self, the d mixture of the Chaff with the Wheat is sometime such, as a far off a man would imagine that he did see but a heap of Chaff, and nothing else. Those worthy Husbandmen that in these last 600 Years, have taken pains in plucking up those pernicious Weeds out of the LORD'S Field, and severing the Chaff from his Grain; cannot be rightly said in doing this, either to have brought in another Field, or to have changed the ancient Grain. The field is the same, but weeded now, unweeded then: the Grain the same, but winnowed now, unwinnowed then. We preach no new Faith, but the same *Catholick* Faith that ever hath been preached: neither was it any part of our meaning to begin a new Church in these latter days of the World, but to reform the old. A Tree that hath the luxurious Branches lopped off, and the noxious things that cleave unto it taken away; is not by this pruning and purging of it made another Tree than it was before: neither is the Church *reformed* in our days, another Church than that which was *deformed* in the days of our Forefathers; though it hath no agreement, for all that, with *Popery*, which is the Pestilence that walked in those times of Darkness, and the Destruction that now wasteth at noon day.

b Mat. 13. 24, 25.

c Infelix lolium, & steriles dominantur avenæ.

d Grana cùm cœperint triturari inter paleam, se non jam tangunt, & quasi non se noverunt, quia intercedit medio palea. Et quicunq; longiùs attendit aream, paleam solummodò putat: nisi diligentiùs intueatur, nisi manum porrigat, nisi spiritu oris, id est, flatu purgante discernat; difficilè pervenit ad discretionem granorum. *Serm.* 221. *de Tempore, tomo* 10. *Oper. August.*

And thus have I finished that which I had to speak, concerning *the Vnity of the Faith*: for the further Explication whereof, the Apostle addeth [*and of the Knowledge of the Son of God.*] Wherein we may observe both the Nature of this Grace, and the Object of it. For the former, we see that Faith is here described unto us by *Knowledge*: to shew unto us, that Knowledge is that thing that is necessarily required in true Believing: Whereof this may be an Argument sufficient; That in Matters of Faith the Scripture doth use indifferently the terms of *Knowing* and *Believing*. So *Job* 19. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth. Joh.* 17. 3. *This is Life eternal, that they Know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Esay* 53. 11. *By his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justifie many.* As therefore in the fundamental Truths of Christian Religion, *Unity of the Faith* is required among all those that belong to the *Catholick* Church:

Church: ſo in thoſe main Grounds likewiſe there is *Vnity of Knowledge* generally required among all that profeſs the Name of Chriſt.

For ſome things there be, the knowledge whereof is abſolutely neceſſary, [e] *neceſſitate medii vel finis* (as the School-men ſpeak:) without which no man may expect, by Gods ordinary Law, to attain unto the *End* of his Faith, the Salvation of his Soul. And in theſe a man may loſe himſelf, not by *Hereſie* only, which is a flat Denying; but by *Ignorance* alſo, which is a bare not Knowing of them: theſe things being acknowledged to be ſo neceſſary, that although it lay not in our power to attain thereunto, yet this invincible Ignorance ſhould not excuſe us from everlaſting Death. Even as if there were one only Remedy, whereby a ſick Man could be recovered, and freed from corporal Death: ſuppoſe the Patient and the Phyſitian both were ignorant of it, the man muſt periſh, as well not knowing it, as if being brought unto him, he had refuſed it. And therefore in this Caſe it is reſolved, that [f] from the explicite Faith, and actual Knowledge of theſe things, nothing can excuſe but only ſuch an Incapacity as is found in Infants, Naturals and diſtracted Perſons, and that in all others which have the uſe of Reaſon, although they want the means of Inſtruction, this Ignorance is not only perillous, but alſo damnable.

Neceſſarium neceſſitate medii appellant Theologi illud, quod ex lege ordinariâ Dei, ſic ad ſalutem neceſſarium eſt, ut quicunq; etiam ob ignorantiam invincibilem, vel quacunq; aliâ de causâ id non fuerit aſſecutus, is nequeat etiam conſequi ſalutem. *Greg. de Valentiâ, tom. 3. commentar. Theolog. quæſt. 2. punct. 2. col.* 299. Illa quæ ſunt neceſſaria neceſſitate finis, ſi deſint nobis etiam ſine culpa noſtra, non excuſabunt nos ab æternâ morte; quamvis non fuerit in noſtrâ poteſtate illa aſſequi. Quamadmodum etiam ſi non ſit niſi unicum remedium, ut aliquis fugiat mortem corporalem, & tale remedium ignoretur & ab infirmo & medico; ſine dubio peribit homo ille. *Dom. Bannes, in 2am 2æ, quæſt. 2. art. 8. col.* 348.

[f] Sicut ad legis Chriſti habitualem fidem omnis viator obligatur ſine ulla exceptione: ſic ab ejus actuali fide nullus excuſatur, niſi ſola incapacitate, *&c.* Parvulos autem & furioſos, cæteriſq; paſſionibus mente captos, ſeu alia naturali impoſſibilitate prohibitos, incapaces voco etſi non ſimpliciter tamen ſecundum quid; ſc. dum his defectibus laborant. *Petr. de Alliaco in quæſtione Veſperiarum.*

The danger then of this Ignorance being, by the Confeſſion of the moſt judicious Divines of both ſides, acknowledged to be ſo great: the woful Eſtate of the poor Country wherein I live, is much to be lamented, where the people generally are ſuffered to periſh for want of knowledge: the vulgar Superſtitions of Popery not doing them half that hurt, that the Ignorance of thoſe common Principles of the Faith doth, which all true Chriſtians are bound to learn. The conſideration whereof, hath

ſome-

sometime drawn me to treat with those of the opposite Party, and to move them: that howsoever in other things we did differ one from another, yet we should joyn together in teaching those main Points, the Knowledge whereof was so necessary unto Salvation, and of the Truth whereof there was no Controversie betwixt us. But what for the Jealousies, which these Distractions in Matters of Religion have bred among us, and what for other Respects, the Motion took small Effect: and so betwixt us both, the poor People are kept still in miserable Ignorance, neither knowing the Grounds of the one Religion nor of the other.

Here the Case (God be thanked) is far otherwise: where your *MAJESTIES* Care can never be sufficiently commended, in taking order, that the chief Heads of the *Catechism* should, in the ordinary Ministery, be diligently propounded and explained unto the People throughout the Land. Which I wish were as duly executed every where, as it was piously by You intended. Great Scholars possibly may think, that it standeth not so well with their Credit, to stoop thus low, and to spend so much of their time, in teaching these Rudiments and first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ. But they should consider, that the laying of the Foundation skilfully, as it is the Matter of greatest importance in the whole Building, so is it the very Master-piece of the wisest Builder. g *According to the Grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise Master-Builder, I have laid the Foundation:* saith the great Apostle. And let the Learnedst of us all try it when-ever we please; we shall find, that to lay this Ground-work rightly, (that is, to apply our selves unto the Capacity of the common Auditory, and to make an ignorant Man to understand these Mysteries in some good Measure) will put us to the Tryal of our Skill, and trouble us a great deal more, than if we were to discuss a Controversie, or handle a subtil Point of Learning in the Schools. Yet h *Christ* did give as well his *Apostles*, and *Prophets*, and *Evangelists*, as his ordinary *Pastors* and *Teachers*, to bring us all, both learned and unlearned, unto *the Unity of this Faith and Knowledge:* and the neglecting of this, is the frustrating of the whole *Work of the Ministery.* For let us Preach never so many Sermons unto the People, our La-

g 1 Cor. 3.10.

h Ephes. 4.11.

bour is but loſt, as long as the Foundation is unlaid, and the firſt Principles untaught, upon which all other Doctrine muſt be builded.

i 2 Tim. 2. 15. He therefore that will i *ſtudy to ſhew himſelf approved unto God, a Workman that needeth not to be aſhamed, dividing the Word of God aright*; muſt have a ſpecial Care to plant this Kingdom, both in the Minds and in the Hearts of them that hear him. I ſay, in the Hearts as well as in the Minds: becauſe we may not content our ſelves with a bare *Theorical* Knowledge, which is an Information only of the Underſtanding; and goeth no further than the Brain; but we muſt labour to attain unto a further Degree both of *Experimental* and of *Practical* Knowledge, in the things that we have learned. A young Man may talk much of the Troubles of the World, and a Scholar in the Univerſity may ſhew a great deal of Wit in making a large Declaration upon that Argument: but when the ſame Men have afterwards been beaten in the World, they will confeſs that they ſpake before they knew not what, and count their former Apprehenſion of theſe things, to be but meer Ignorance, in reſpect of that new Learning which now they have bought by dear Experience. The Tree in Paradiſe, of which our firſt Pa-

k Gen. 2. 9. 17. rents were forbidden to eat, was called k *the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*: becauſe it ſignified unto them, that as now while they ſtood upon terms of Obedience with their Creator, they knew nothing but *Good*; ſo at what time ſoever they did tranſgreſs his Commandement, they ſhould begin to know *Evil* alſo, whereof before they had no knowledge; not but that they had an *intellectual* Knowledge of it before (for he that knoweth Good, cannot be ignorant of that which is contrary unto it, *Rectum* being always *index ſui & obliqui*:) but that till then they never had felt any Evil, they never had any *experimental* Knowledge of it. So our Apoſtle in this Epiſtle boweth his Knees unto the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that he would grant unto theſe

l Epheſ. 3. 19. *Epheſians*, l *to know the Love of Chriſt which paſſeth Knowledge*: ſhewing, that there is a further Degree of Knowledge in this kind, that may be felt by the Heart, though not comprehended by the Brain: and in the Epiſtle to the *Phi-*

m Phil. 3. 8. *lippians*, m he counteth all things but loſs *for the excellent Know-*

Knowledge sake of Christ Jesus his Lord. Meaning hereby a Knowledge grounded upon deep Experience of the Vertue of Christ's Death and Resurrection, in his own Soul: as he expoundeth it himself, in the words following: n *That I may know him, and the power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his Sufferings, and be made conformable unto his Death.* n Ibid. ver. 10.

There is an *Experimental* Knowledge then to be looked after, beside the *Mental:* and so is there a *Practical* Knowledge likewise, as well as an *Intellectual.* When Christ is said to have *known no Sin*; we cannot understand this of *Intellectual* Knowledge (for had he not thus known Sin, he could not have reproved it as he did) but of *Practical.* So that o *He knew no Sin,* in St. *Paul*; must be conceived to be the very same with, p *He did no Sin,* in St. *Peter.* In the first to the *Romans*, they that q *knew God*, because they *glorified him not as God,* are therefore said, r *not to have God in their Knowledge.* God made his Ways and his Laws known to the Children of *Israel* in the Desert; and yet he s said of them: *It is a People that do err in their Hearts, and they have not known my Ways.* For there is an Error in the Heart, as well as in the Brain: and a kind of Ignorance arising from the Will, as well as from the Mind. And therefore in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, t all Sins are termed ἀγνοήματα, *Ignorances,* and u Sinners ἀγνοοῦντες καὶ πλανώμενοι, *ignorant and erring* Persons; because however in the general, the Understanding may be informed rightly, yet when particular Actions come to be resolved upon, Mens perverse Wills and inordinate Affections, cloud their Minds, and lead them out of the way. That therefore is to be accounted sound *Knowledge*, which sinketh from the Brain into the Heart, and from thence breaketh forth into Action: (setting Head, Heart, Hand, and all a work:) and so much only must thou reckon thy self to know in Christianity, as thou art able to make use of in Practice. For, as Saint *James* saith of Faith; x *Shew me thy Faith by thy Works:* so doth he in like manner of Knowledge: y *Who is a wise Man, and endued with Knowledge amongst you? let him shew out of a good Conversation his Works with Meekness of Wisdom.* And St. *John* much to the same purpose: z *Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.*

o 2 Cor. 5. 21.
p 1 Pet. 2. 22.
q Rom. 1. 21.
r Ibid. ver. 18.
s Psal. 95. 10. Heb. 3. 10.
t Heb. 9. 7. compared with Levit. 16. 16, 17.
u Heb. 5. 2. *Aristot. Ethic. lib.* 3. *cap.* 1. Ἄγνοεῖ μὲν δοκεῖ πᾶς ὁ μοχθηρὸς ἃ δεῖ πράττειν, καὶ ὧν δεῖ ἀφεκτέον. καὶ διὰ τοιαύτην ἁμαρτίαν, ἄδικοι καὶ ὅλως κακοὶ γίνονται.
x Jam. 2. 18.
y Jam. 3. 13.
z 1 Joh. 2. 3, 4.

ments. He that ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Lyar, and the Truth is not in him.

He ſpeaketh there of Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous: *the Son of God*, who is here in my Text likewiſe made the *Object* of this Knowledge. [a] *Thou art Chriſt the Son of the Living God:* is by Chriſt himſelf made the *Rock* upon which the whole Church is builded. And [b] *Other Foundation* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt.* [c] Not that we ſhould think, that there were no other fundamental Doctrine to be acknowledged but this alone (for the Articles of the Holy Ghoſt, Forgiveneſs of Sins, Reſurrection of the Dead, eternal Judgment, and ſuch other like, have their place alſo in the [d] Foundation) but becauſe this is the moſt ſpecial Object of Faith, and the primary Foundation of the other. For *firſt*, as *God* is made the coæquate Object of the whole Body of Divinity, notwithſtanding it treateth alſo of Men and Angels, Heaven and Hell, Sin and Obedience, and ſundry other Particulars; becauſe all theſe are brought to God *Reductively*, if not as Explications of his Nature, yet of his Works and Kingdom: ſo likewiſe may *Chriſt* be made the Primary Head of other fundamental Articles, becauſe they have all reference unto him; being ſuch as concern either his Father, or his Spirit, or his Incarnation, or his Office of Mediation, or his Church, or the ſpecial Benefits which he hath purchaſed for it.

a Mat. 16. 16, 18.

b 1 Cor. 3. 11.

c *Vid. Aug. lib. de fide & oper. cap. 9.*

d Heb. 6. 1. 2.

Secondly, Howſoever this Faith and Knowledge, being taken in their larger Extent, have for their full Object whatever is revealed in the Word of God: yet as they build us upon the Foundation, as they incorporate us into the myſtical Body, as they are the Means of our Juſtification and Life, they look upon the *Son of God*, and him only. *The holy Scriptures* (within the bounds whereof the utmoſt Extent of all our Faith and Knowledge muſt be contained) *are able to make us wiſe unto Salvation*; but yet *through Faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus* (2 Tim. 3. 15.) So, *by his Knowledge* (or the Knowledge of himſelf) *ſhall my righteous Servant juſtifie many:* ſaith the Father of the Son, Eſay 53. 11. And *the Life which I now live in the Fleſh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me:* ſaith the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 2. 20. The Children of

of *Israel* in the Wilderness, being stung with fiery Serpents, were directed, for their Recovery, to look upon the brazen Serpent: which was a Figure of e *the Son of Man, lifted up* upon the Cross; *that whosoever did Believe in him, might not perish, but have eternal Life.* Now as the *Israelites* with the same Eyes, and with the same visive Faculty, wherewith they beheld the Sands and the Mountains in the Desert, did look upon the brazen Serpent also; but were cured by fastning their sight upon that alone, and not by looking upon any other Object: so by the same Faith and Knowledge whereby we are justified, f *we understand that the World was framed by the Word of God,* and believe all other Truths revealed; and yet *fides quâ justificans*, Faith as it doth justifie us, doth not look upon these, but fixeth it self solely upon the Son of God, not knowing any thing here but Jesus Christ and him Crucified. And thus hath our Saviour a special and peculiar Place in that larger Foundation; according to that of the Apostle, *Ephes.* 2. 20. g *Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, of which* (for so his words in the Original may well bear it) *Jesus Christ is the Chief Corner-stone.*

e Joh. 3. 14, 15.

f Heb. 11. 3.

g ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου λίθου αὐτοῦ (sc. θεμελίου) Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

It followeth now, that we should proceed from the *Foundation* to the *Structure*: and so h *leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, go on unto Perfection* [*unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ*:] There is a time wherein Christ is but begun, and as it were a-breeding in us. *Gal.* 4. 19. *My little Children, of whom I travel in Birth again until Christ be formed in you.* After that he hath been formed in our Hearts, he is at first but as a Babe, there yet resteth not at that stay: but as in his natural Body he i *increased in Stature*, so in every part of his Mystical Body he hath set for himself a certain *Measure of Stature*, and a *Fulness* of Growth; which being attained unto, a Christian is thereby made *a perfect Man.* And for this end also doth the Apostle here shew, that the Ministery was instituted, k *that we henceforth should be no more Children* (as it is in the words immediately following in my Text) but that we might *grow up into him in all things, which is the Head*, even *Christ.* For the *Perfection* which the Apostle here speaketh of, is not to be taken absolutely,

h Heb. 6. 1.

i Luk. 2. 52.

k Ephes. 4. 14, 15.

lutely, (as if any abſolute Perfection could be found among Men in this life) but in compariſon with Childhood; as the Oppoſition is more clearly made by him, in 1 *Corinth.* 14. 20. *Brethren, be not Children in Underſtanding, howbeit in Malice be ye Children, but in Underſtanding be Perfect*, that is to ſay, of Mans Eſtate. And *Heb.* 5. 13, 14. *Every one that uſeth Milk, is unskilful in the Word of Righteouſneſs; for he is a Babe: but ſtrong Meat belongeth to them that are Perfect*, that is, *that are of full Age*; as our Interpreters have rightly rendred it.

Now as there is great difference among Men in their natural Growth, ſo is there no leſs Variety among them alſo in reſpect of their ſpiritual Stature: there being ſeveral Degrees of this imperfect kind of Perfection here ſpoken of; which, according to the diverſity of Times, Places and Perſons, may admit a greater or a leſſer Meaſure. For we may not think that the ſame meaſure of Knowledge (for Example) is ſufficient for a learned Man and an unlearned; for a Paſtor, and for an ordinary Chriſtian; for thoſe that lived in the time of Darkneſs, and them that enjoy the Light of the Goſpel; for them that have the Means, and them that want it: But according to the meaſure of the Gift of God, we muſt know notwithſtanding that it is required generally of all men; that they *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* (2. *Pet.* 3. 18.)

1 Epheſ. 4. 15. Not in *Knowledge* only, but in *Grace:* even I *grow up into him in ALL things, which is the Head*; as our Apoſtle here admoniſheth us. We muſt proceed *from Faith to Faith*, (*Rom.* 1. 17.) that is, from one meaſure and degree of it unto another: and this being the Root, and other Graces as it were the Branches, if it grow apace, other Graces alſo muſt haſten, and ripen, and grow proportionably with it: elſe thou mayeſt juſtly ſuſpect, that thy growth is not ſound, and anſwerable to that which the Apoſtle ſheweth to be in the myſtical Body of Chriſt; which

m Epheſ. 4. 16. m *according to the effectual working in the Meaſure of* EVERY *Part, maketh increaſe of the Body, unto the edifying of it ſelf in Love.* The time will not permit me to proceed

n Heb. 13. 20, 21. any further: and therefore here I end. n *Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jeſus,*

that

that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of his Everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

FINIS